

1 **ABSTRACT**

2 Systems and methods for providing network access, e.g. Internet access, are
3 described. An architecture includes a host organization network through which
4 network access is provided. The host organization network can be advantageously
5 deployed in public areas such as airports and shopping malls. An
6 authentication/negotiation component is provided for authenticating various users
7 and negotiating for services with service providers on behalf of the system users.
8 The authentication/negotiation component can include one or more specialized
9 servers and a policy manager that contains policies that govern user access to the
10 Internet. An authentication database is provided and authenticates various users of
11 the system. An access module is provided through which individual client
12 computing devices can access the Internet. In one embodiment, the access module
13 comprises individual wireless access points that permit the client computing
14 devices to wirelessly communicate data packets that are intended for the Internet.
15 In one aspect, users are given a variety of choices of different service levels that
16 they can use for accessing the Internet. The service levels can vary in such things
17 as bandwidth allocation and security measures. The various service levels can be
18 purchased by the users using their computing devices.

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